

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling call admission within a system comprising including a plurality of media gateways interconnected by a packet switched backbone, the method comprising the steps of:

at least one media gateway, monitoring the level of congestion suffered by incoming packets to that gateway for a first gateway wherein said incoming packets are transmitted from either media gateway or groups a group of media gateways over said backbone and wherein said first media gateway acting as a terminating media gateway for said group of media gateways; and

following receipt of a request for receiving a request for said at least one first media gateway to terminate a new bearer connection extending over said backbone from a second media gateway within said group of media gateways a "peer" media gateway,

making a decision on the admissibility of that request based upon the previously monitored level of congestion suffered by said first media gateway for said incoming packets from said second media gateway or from said group of media gateways; and that peer media gateway or a group of media gateways containing the peer gateway.

rejecting said request for said new bear connection based on said admission decision.

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of monitoring the level of congestion suffered by said incoming packets to one of a plurality of media gateways comprises for said first media gateway comprises the step of:

examining said incoming packets received at that said first media gateway to determine whether or not they contain a congestion notification flag.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of monitoring the level of congestion suffered by said incoming packets to the one of a plurality of media gateways further comprising for said first media gateway comprises the step of:

monitoring the rate at which incoming packets are dropped.

4. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 3, wherein the step of monitoring the level of congestion suffered by incoming packets to a gateway the one of a plurality of media gateways further comprising the steps of:

monitoring the rate at which incoming packets are dropped by the backbone and examining said incoming packets received at the one of a plurality of media gateways that gateway said first media gateway to determine whether or not they said incoming packets contain a congestion notification flag.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of monitoring the level of congestion suffered by said incoming packets to the one of a plurality of media gateways comprises for said first media gateway comprises the step of:

associating incoming packets or packet sequences with an originating gateway based upon source addresses or parts of source addresses.

6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said packet switched backbone is an Internet Protocol (IP) backbone.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of making said decision on the admissibility of said request is made at said first media gateway a decision on the admissibility of a request for a media gateway to terminate a bearer, further comprises making the decision at the media gateway.

8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of making the decision on the admissibility of a request for a media gateway to terminate a bearer said request is made at the a media gateway controller controlling said first media gateway at least one media gateway, and said monitored congestion levels are signalled to the media gateway controller by the first media gateway.

9. (Currently Amended) A media gateway arranged to control call admission within a system comprising including a plurality of media gateways interconnected by a packet switched backbone, the media gateway comprising:

means for monitoring the level of congestion suffered by incoming packets to that gateway from other media gateways ~~or groups or of media gateways~~ over said backbone wherein said gateway acting as a terminating media gateway for said other media gateways;

means for receiving a request for that media gateway to terminate a new bearer connection extending over said backbone from a requesting media gateway within said other media gateways; a "peer" media gateway; and

means coupled to the monitoring means and the receiving means for making a decision on the admissibility of that request based upon the previously monitored level of congestion suffered by said incoming packets transmitted from said requesting media gateway or from that peer said other media gateways gateway or a group of media gateways containing said requesting media gateway; the peer gateway.

means for rejecting said request for said new bearer connection based on said admission decision.

10. (Currently Amended) A media gateway controller arranged to control call admission within a system comprising including a plurality of media gateways interconnected by a packet switched backbone, the media gateway controller comprising:

an interface towards at least one a first media gateway;

means for receiving monitored congestion levels from said first media gateway each media gateway to which the media gateway controller has an interface, the monitored congestion levels being indicative of the congestion suffered by incoming packets to the [[or]] respective gateways said first media gateway from other media gateways or groups of media gateways over said backbone wherein said first media gateway acting as a terminating media gateway for said other media gateways;

means for receiving a call request requiring that a-said first media gateway terminate a new bearer connection extending over said backbone from a "peer"-media gateway; and second media gateway within said other media gateways;

means coupled to both the receiving means for making a decision on the admissibility of that request based upon the congestion level suffered by said incoming packets for said first media gateway from that peer said second media gateway or a group of media gateways containing the peer gateway from said other media gateways; and

means for rejecting said request for said new bearer connection based on said decision.

11. – 12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A computer program product within a computer usable medium for controlling call admission within a system including comprising a plurality of media gateways interconnected by a packet switched backbone, the computer program comprising instructions within the computer usable medium for:

monitoring the level of congestion suffered by incoming packets to-at least one for a first media gateway wherein said incoming packets are transmitted from other media gateways or-groups-of media gateways over said backbone and wherein said first media gateway acting as a terminating media gateway for said other media gateways; and

~~following receipt of receiving a request for said at least one first media gateway to terminate a new bearer connection extending over said backbone from a "peer" media gateway second media gateway within said other media gateways.~~

~~making a decision on the admissibility of that request based upon the previously monitored level of congestion suffered by said first media gateway for said incoming packets from said second media gateway or from said other media gateways that peer media gateway or a group of media gateways containing the peer-second media gateway.~~

14. (Currently Amended) The computer program product according to ~~claim 13 claim 1~~, wherein the instructions for monitoring the level of congestion suffered by ~~said incoming packets for said first media gateway further to one of a plurality of media gateways comprises instructions for~~

~~examining said incoming packets received at that first media gateway to determine whether or not they contain a congestion notification flag.~~

15. (Currently Amended) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein the instructions for monitoring the level of congestion suffered by ~~said incoming packets for said first media gateway to the one of a plurality of media gateways further comprise instructions for~~

~~monitoring the rate at which packets are dropped.~~

16. (Currently Amended) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein the instructions for monitoring the level of congestion suffered by ~~said incoming packets for said first media gateway to the one of a plurality of media gateways further comprise instructions for~~

~~monitoring the rate at which packets are dropped by the backbone and~~

~~examining said incoming packets received at the one of a plurality of media gateways that first media gateway to determine whether or not they said incoming packets contain a congestion notification flag.~~

17. (Currently Amended) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein the instructions for monitoring the level of congestion suffered by said incoming packets for said first media gateway to the one of a plurality of media gateways comprises instructions for

associating incoming packets or packet sequences with an originating gateway based upon source addresses or parts of source addresses.

18. (Previously Presented) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein said packet switched backbone is an Internet Protocol (IP) backbone.

19. (Currently Amended) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein said instructions for making a said decision on the admissibility of a said request for a said first media gateway to terminate a said new bearer connection, further comprises making the decision is made at the first media gateway.

20. (Currently Amended) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein said instructions for making the decision on the admissibility of a said request for a said first media gateway to terminate a said new bearer connection is made at the a media gateway controller controlling said at least one first media gateway, and said monitored congestion levels are signaled to the media gateway controller by the first media gateway.